

**Marine Endangered Species Monitoring Program  
Hopper Dredging Project Summary  
Longboat Key, Florida  
Beach Replenishment**



**US Army Corps of Engineers  
B + B Dredging  
11 December – 19 December 2005**

**Submitted by:  
Jennifer Sumwalt  
Project Manager / Biologist**

***East Coast Observers, Inc.  
787 W. 49<sup>th</sup> Street  
Norfolk, VA. 23508  
(757) 227-5779***

## **ABSTRACT**

*A twenty-four-hour-per-day endangered species monitoring program was conducted onboard the hopper dredge Atchafalaya from 11 December – 19 December 2005. Endangered and threatened species targeted include the Loggerhead (Caretta caretta), Kemp's Ridley (Lepidochelys kempii), Green (Chelonia mydas), Hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata, and Leatherback (Dermochelys coriacea) sea turtles. Observer monitoring was provided by East Coast Observers, inc. (ECO, inc.) and was at 100%, using two observers approved by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). This project was awarded by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and contracted through B + B Dredging Company.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The endangered species observers conducted twenty four hour monitoring aboard the hopper dredge Atchafalaya for eight days of the beach replenishment project off the coast of Longboat Key, Florida. Pursuant to agreements with NMFS, two certified observers were required to work onboard the dredge in 12 hour shifts allowing coverage 24 hours per day. As beach replenishment was critical to maintaining a healthy tourism influx in this resort area, beach erosion and damages from various hurricanes and tropical storms necessitated the urgency for this project. The presence of marine life including sea turtles and manatees are present virtually year round due to climate and water temperatures, making it critical to maintain species monitoring aboard the dredge. Sea turtle trawling was conducted by Coastwise Consulting. Please reference data from Coastwise for all relevant information.

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

East Coast Observers, Inc. was subcontracted by B + B Dredging to conduct onboard endangered species monitoring. ECO, inc. was to provide necessary trained personnel and relevant equipment to inspect, clean and monitor inflow screening located onboard the Dredge Atchafalaya. Observers were also required to monitor the draghead and draghead deflector each time they were brought onboard for cleaning and maintenance, and complete load data sheets for each subsequent load. Any death or injury to endangered species was to be identified, measured, photographed and logged. Proper disposal of said species was to be performed by the observer and dredge personnel. Load sheets were to be completed for each individual load, and included pertinent information to each load. Load time start, load time stop, condition of screening and draghead deflector, type of dredged material, weather and sea conditions, screen contents and species bycatch. Any take information was to be noted on the load data sheet, and then detailed in a separate incident report. Daily and weekly summary forms were to be completed and given to dredge and USACE personnel. Day bridge watches were assigned to the observer when not occupied with screen and draghead inspection duties.

Dredging commenced on 11 December 2005 and continued until 19 December 2005. No takes involving any endangered species occurred during the span of this project. Trawling was conducted for the duration of this project.

## RESULTS

**Project Date: 11 December – 19 December 2005**

**Project Length: 9 days**

**Coverage Level: 100% onboard dredge**

**Total Number of Takes: 0**

**Number of Loads: 70**

**Water Temperature: 18 – 19 degrees Celsius**

## BY-CATCH LISTING

*Clear Nosed Skate*

*Blue Crab*

*Sand Dollar*

*Channled Whelk*

*Raja eglanteria*

*Callinectes sapidus*

*Echinarachius parma*

*Busycon canaliculatum*